(b) The World Bank expert on agriculture, Mr. V. Rajagopalan has identified improving overall quality of research, a focus on plant breeding other than the major food grains, imbalances in geographic allocation of research funds failure to set up priorities and poor research system organisation and management as some of the main issues of agricultural system in India.

(c) The remedial measures taken in this connection include the following;

(i) Strengthening of Institutes conducting research in all crops.

(ii) Providing support to State Agricultural Universities (SAU) for improvingg regional research capabilities under National Agricultural Research Project (NARP).

(iii) Promoting farming systems approach.

(iv) Making appropriate structural and functional changes in the research organisations on the advice of expert agencies.

(v) Granting of funds for time-bound ad-hoc research in critical areas.

(vi) Setting up of a Standing Policy Planning Committee for the Indian Council of Agril. Research.

Fellowship scheme in ICAR

525. SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a press newsitem captioned "Resource Crunch hits ICAR fellowships" as reported in the Indian Express dated 29th January 1993;

(b) whether due to financial crunch the ICAR has decided to wind up the fellowship scheme;

(c) since when the fellowship scheme was in existence in the ICAR; and

(d) what are the reasons that ICAR has decided to discontinue this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The scheme has been in existence since the Second Five Year Plan.

(d) Final decision to discontinue the scheme has not been taken.

Diversion of Land from Food Crops

526. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers are switching over to more lucrative crops like oilseeds and sugarcane resulting in lower productivity of foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether Government would attribute this to the recent price hike on fertilizers like MOP and DAP; and

(c) what are the steps proposed to be taken to wean back the farmers to foodgrain cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) There is not much exidence of diversion of land from foodgrains to other cash crops except in a few isolated pockets of the country.

(b): The farmers allocate their area under different crops taking into consideration the relative profitability of various crops.

(c): The various crop oriented production programmes for increasing food-grains production in the country are under implementation. Besides, enough price incentive is also being provided for increasing foodgrain production.

Agricultural Universities in Madhya Pradesh

527. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes submitted by Agricultural Universities in Madhya Pradesh to ICAR seeking financial assistance during 1992-93, the amount sought and sanctioned and the proposals which are still under consideration;

(b) the financial assistance provided to the Agricultural Universities in the State during the last three years;

(c) whether the performance of these universities was assessed during these years; if so, with what results; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to strengthen the research activities of Agriculure Universities during the Eighth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Sir, 20 schemes have been submitted by the Universities out of which 18 totalling Rs. 121.68 lakh have been sanctioned. Two schemes costing Rs. 103 lakh are under consideration.

(b) The funds allocated during the last three years are:

1990-91	. .	Rs 575.84 lakhs
1991-92	. .	Rs. 622.90 „
1992-93	. .	Rs. 519.78 „

(c) Yes Sir. The performance has been found to be satisfactory.

(d) Govt. proposes;

(i) Need based strengthening of All India Coord. Research Projects.

(ii) Developmental grants to the Universities for infrastructural development;

(iii) Improvement of regional research capabilities through National Agricultural Research Project and

(iv) Sanctioning of ad-hoc research schemes in critical areas.

Crop Insurance Scheme

528. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN. Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the figures, state-wise and year-wise, of the total premium paid by farmers under Crop Insurance Scheme in different states in last three years; and

(b) what is the total amount disbursed as claims to the farmers under this scheme in the respective states in respective years in the last three years?